

Appl. No. 09/940,381
Amtd. Dated: 11/16/2004
Reply to Office action of August 6, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed August 6, 2004. In the Office Action, claims 6-7, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 15-20 were allowed. No amendment to the allowed claims has been made.

In addition, claims 22-27 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In response to the objection, claims 22, 24 and 26 have been rewritten into independent form to include limitations of base claims 1, 11 and 21, respectively. Hence, claims 22, 24 and 26 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 23, 25 and 27 are dependent on claims 22, 24 and 26, respectively. Hence, these claims are allowable.

Claims 1-5, 8, 11, 14 and 21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hendrickson (USP 6,055,281). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, the outstanding §102(b) rejection is moot based on the amendments set forth below.

Claims 1, 11 and 21 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 2, 4, 5 & 8 previously depended on cancelled claim 1. These claims now depend on objected claim 22, which has been placed into independent form by including the limitations of claim 1. Moreover, claim 3 remains as being dependent on claim 2. Hence, claims 2-5 and 8 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 14 previously depended on cancelled claim 11. However, this claims now depends on objected claim 24, which has been placed into independent form by including the limitations of claim 11. Hence, claim 14 is in condition for allowance.

Based on the foregoing amendments, the outstanding §102(b) rejection of claims 1-5, 8, 11, 14 and 21 has been properly traversed. Withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection is respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

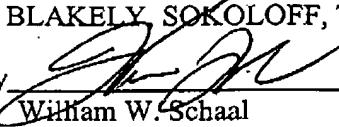
Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-10, 12-20 and 22-27 are in condition for allowance and request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued for this case.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Dated: November 16, 2004

By


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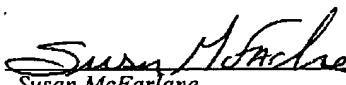
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Susan McFarlane

November 16, 2004

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